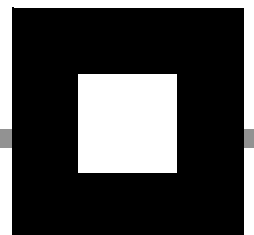




Cognos Impromptu®

What's New in Impromptu 6.0



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Impromptu ® version 6.0

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Chapter 1: Administer Impromptu

This chapter describes new features in Impromptu 6.0 that make it easier for you to administer Impromptu for other users. You can

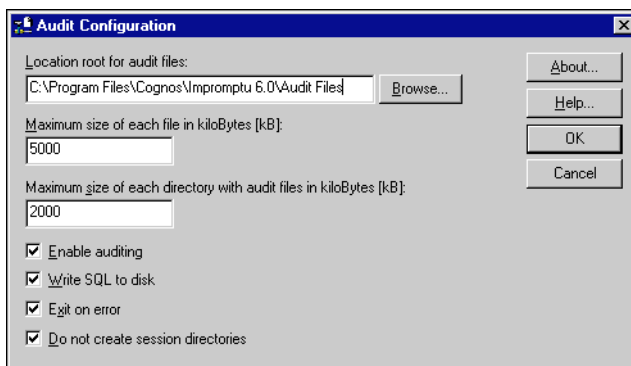
- ✓ audit Impromptu performance
 - ✓ annotate the contents of your catalogs
 - ✓ automate Impromptu using the Impromptu Type Library
 - ✓ use catalogs created in Cognos Architect
 - ✓ control security using Cognos Access Manager
 - ✓ use bulk fetch to retrieve large result sets quickly
 - ✓ access stored procedures
-

Audit Impromptu Performance

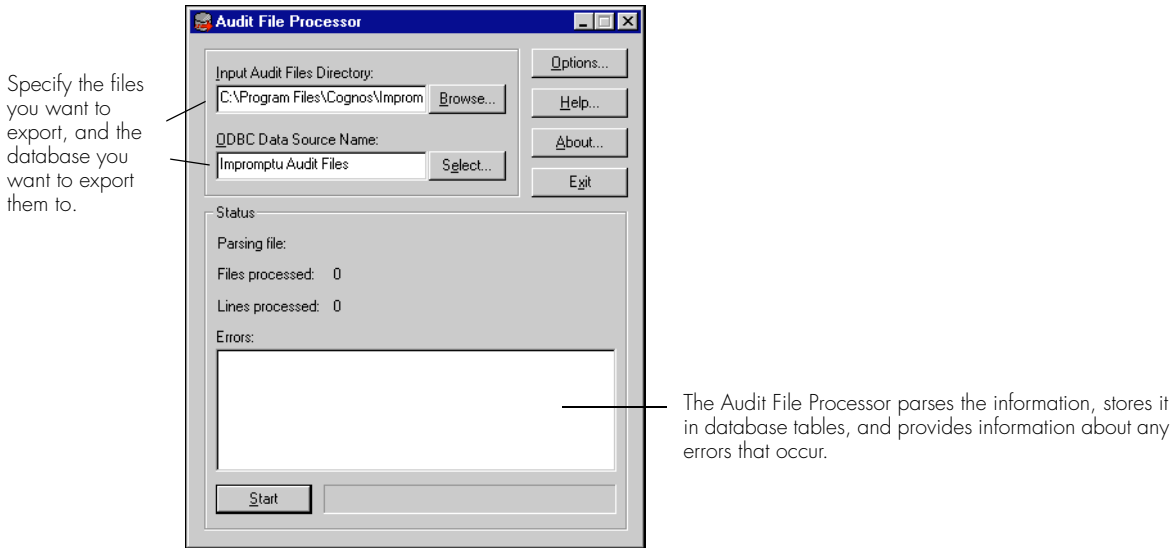
Impromptu 6.0 can record audit information in a text file. You can use the information to find out how changes to your reporting environment affect performance times. For example, when you open a report, Impromptu records how long it takes, the report name, the report type, the database you are attaching to, and the SQL statement passed to the database.

You can use the new Audit Configuration utility to

- set the audit file location
- set the maximum space that audit files can take
- log audit information from different Impromptu sessions to files in different folders



When you want to analyze the information, use the Audit File Processor utility to export the information to a relational database. You can export the information to any database that can be accessed using an ODBC connection. Impromptu 6.0 includes a sample catalog and report you can use to attach to the database and explore the audit information.



For more information about auditing, see the Impromptu Administrator online help.

Annotate the Contents Of Your Catalogs

If your catalogs are large and complex, you may want to store descriptive information about their contents in an external data source. Your company may already store catalog information in a relational database or metadata repository. In Impromptu 6.0, you can use that information to provide context help that describes folders, columns, prompts, filters, and calculations.

In the Query or Folder dialog boxes, or any instance of the expression editor, Impromptu makes a standard system call when you

- click the context-sensitive help button and select a catalog item
- select a catalog item and press F1

The system call contains information that identifies the catalog item. You can create an application in C++ or Visual Basic that receives the call, searches your external data source for information about the item, and shows the information. Impromptu 6.0 includes a sample Visual Basic application and a Microsoft Access database that contains annotation information for the Great Outdoors Sales Data sample catalog.



For more information about annotations, see the Impromptu Administrator online help.

Use the Impromptu Type Library

The type library makes it easier for C++ programmers to use Impromptu automation components in their code.



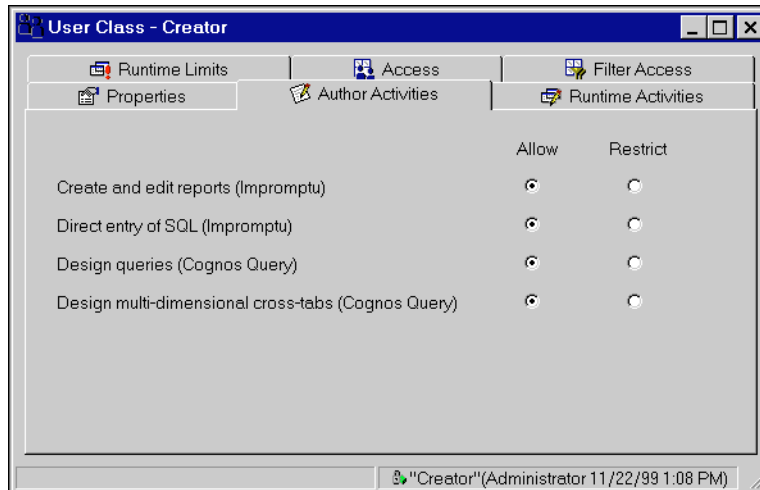
For more information about type libraries, see the Impromptu online help.

Use Catalogs Created In Cognos Architect

You can use Cognos Architect to create catalogs for Impromptu. Architect is a common metadata tool included with Impromptu. You can use Architect to assemble metadata from existing data sources, and then create a business model of your databases for use with PowerPlay, Impromptu, and Cognos Query.

You can create several catalogs from the same business model, each tailored to a specific audience. You can also create user classes for each catalog and set several properties, including

- whether the user class can create and edit reports
- the maximum number of rows the user class can retrieve
- the maximum number of database tables the user class can access
- which parts of the catalog the user class can view



You can use Architect to control user class permissions in the same way Impromptu controls user profile permissions.

The new catalog is read-only, and uses Cognos Access Manager for security.

For more information about Architect, see the Architect online help.

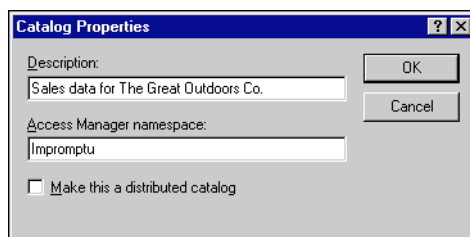


Control Security With Cognos Access Manager

Impromptu 6.0 includes Cognos Access Manager, a set of applications you can use to control security for your Cognos applications. Other products, such as Architect, PowerPlay, Impromptu Web Reports, and Cognos Query, use Access Manager for security as well. If you integrate with these applications, you may want to use Access Manager to prevent having to log on more than once.

Access Manager uses LDAP technology: a list of users and user classes, along with passwords and permissions, are stored in a namespace on a directory server. When you start a Cognos application, Access Manager compares your user name and password to information in the namespace.

You can use the Catalog Properties dialog box to specify a namespace for Access Manager to check every time you open the catalog. If you aren't listed in the namespace, Impromptu denies access.



If you don't specify a namespace, but you have Access Manager set up on your computer, Impromptu checks a default namespace instead. If you aren't listed in the default namespace, you can still log on using catalog security. You can also use Access Manager to add your operating system user name and password to the namespace so that you can log on to the catalog automatically.



For more information about Access Manager, see the *Impromptu Administrator's Guide*.

Retrieve Large Result Sets Using Bulk Fetch

Impromptu 6.0 can retrieve more than one row of data in a single fetch call. If your database also supports bulk fetch, you can improve processing time for large queries.

By default, Impromptu attempts to retrieve 100 rows of data at once. You can change the amount of rows retrieved by typing the following in the Query Options section of the Impromptu.ini file:

```
bulk fetch rows= n
```

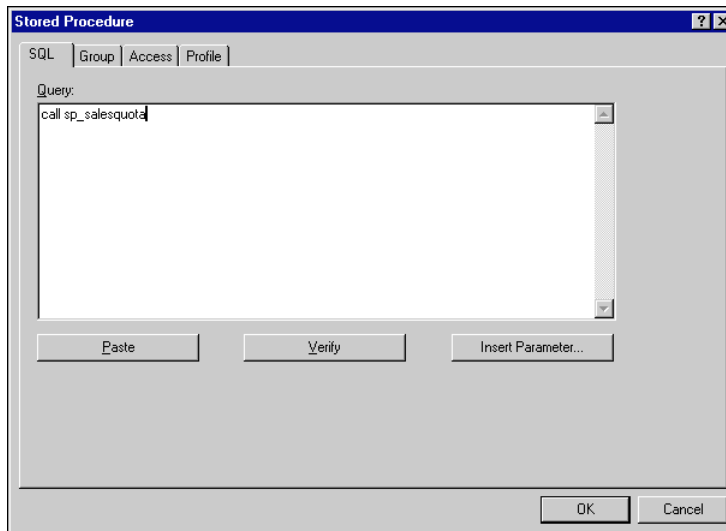


For more information about bulk fetch, see the *Impromptu Administrator's Guide*.

Access Stored Procedures

Impromptu 6.0 can access stored procedures in several databases, including Oracle, DB2, and Microsoft SQL Server. Stored procedures are SQL statements in your database that perform standardized, recurring tasks. Stored procedures improve performance because they only need to be compiled the first time they run. Also, Impromptu doesn't have to prepare the SQL statements and send them to the database because they are already there.

Impromptu 6.0 includes a new template you can use to access stored procedures. Just type a call for the stored procedure in the Query box and click OK.



If the stored procedure requires parameters, you can use prompts to include the parameters in your call. When you click the Insert Parameter button, the Prompt Manager dialog box appears. You must create a prompt for each input and output parameter that the stored procedure requires, and type the prompts into your call.

For example, a stored procedure retrieves information on the customer whose number you enter, and returns the total purchase amount for that customer as an output parameter. You must create two prompts: one for the customer number, and one for the total purchase amount. You can enter them into your call by typing the following.

```
call stored_procedure (?custno? IN, ?purchase? OUT)
```



For more information about stored procedures, see the *Impromptu Administrator's Guide*.

Chapter 2: Build Reports

This chapter describes new features in Impromptu 6.0 that are intended for report creators. You can

- ✓ format list reports easier
- ✓ drill through to Cognos Query
- ✓ import queries from Cognos Query
- ✓ open multiple instances and versions of Impromptu
- ✓ cut, copy, and paste expressions
- ✓ export formatted list reports to Excel
- ✓ insert crosstab sub-reports
- ✓ create PowerPrompts applications
- ✓ sort picklist prompts
- ✓ use reports as data sources for other reports

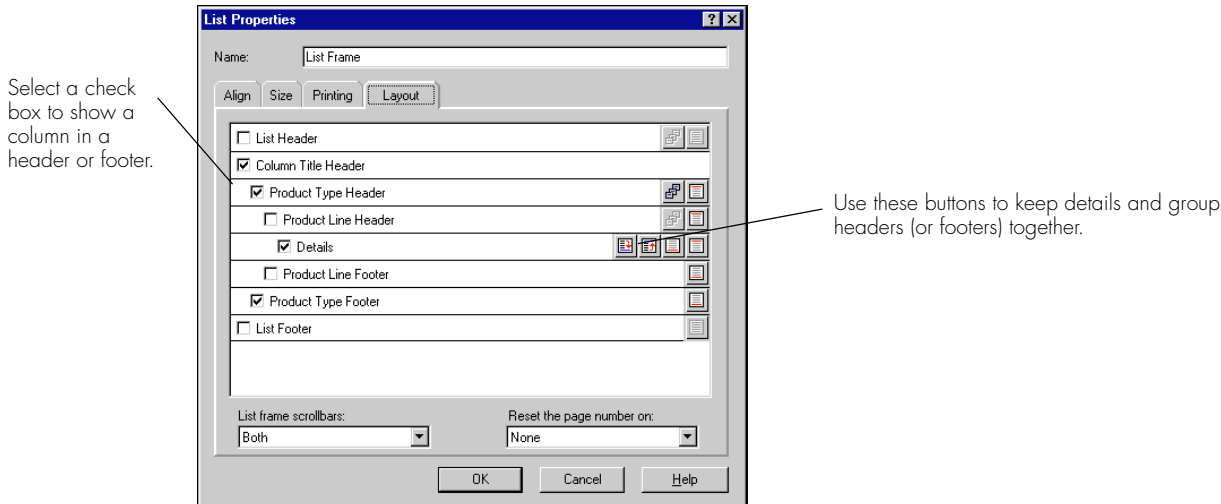
Improved Formatting features for List Reports

Simple list reports are easier to format in Impromptu 6.0. You can use the redesigned List Properties dialog box to control

- which data items appear in headers and footers
- page breaks
- repeating headers
- scrollbars
- page numbering

Keep Details and Group Headers (or Footers) Together

You can improve report readability by preventing a group header or footer from appearing on a page by itself.

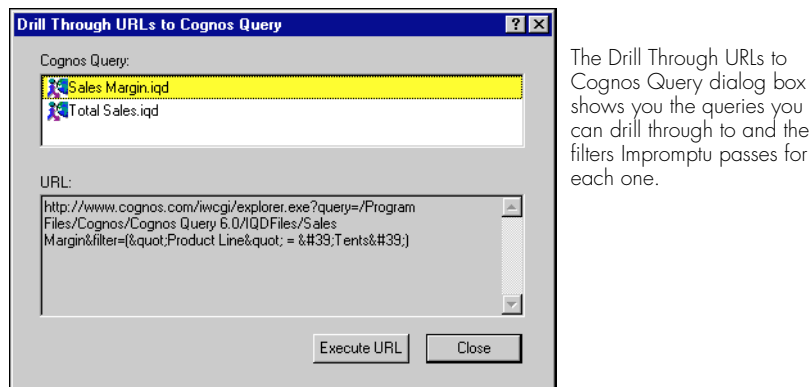


For more information about headers and footers, see the Impromptu online help.

Drill Through to Cognos Query

If you use Impromptu Web Reports to distribute your reports over the Web, you can set up drill-through access to Cognos Query, an ad hoc reporting tool for the Web. Impromptu Web Reports users can view your Impromptu reports in .pdf format, and then drill through to Cognos Query and explore the data in their Web browsers.

To set up drill-through access, you must associate a column in your report with a query: the Cognos Query equivalent to a report. When report consumers in Impromptu Web Reports click the column, they drill through to the query. The query is filtered to show only information for the drill-through column. You can use Cognos Query to sort, filter, and format the query, and then follow links to related information.

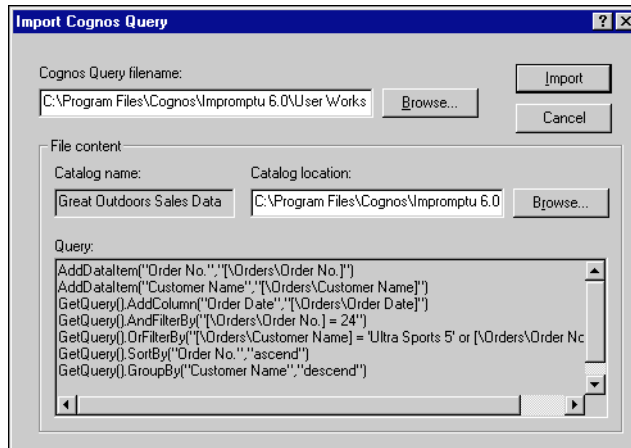


For more information about Cognos Query, see the Impromptu online help.

Import Queries from Cognos Query

If you create a useful query in Cognos Query and want to distribute it to others, you can import it into Impromptu 6.0 as a list report. In Impromptu, you can change and format the query as necessary and redistribute it on your network, or over the Web using Impromptu Web Reports.

If you use Cognos Architect to create a business model for Impromptu and Cognos Query, both products have access to the same data. This ensures that when you import your query into Impromptu, you will get the results you expect.



Use the new Import Cognos Query dialog box to pick which query to import and which catalog to use.



For more information about Cognos Query, see the Impromptu online help.

Open Multiple Instances and Versions of Impromptu

You can increase your productivity by opening more than one instance of Impromptu 6.0 at the same time. Each instance can open a different catalog and connect to a different database. Or, you can open the same catalog in two instances and continue working while you wait for a report to run.

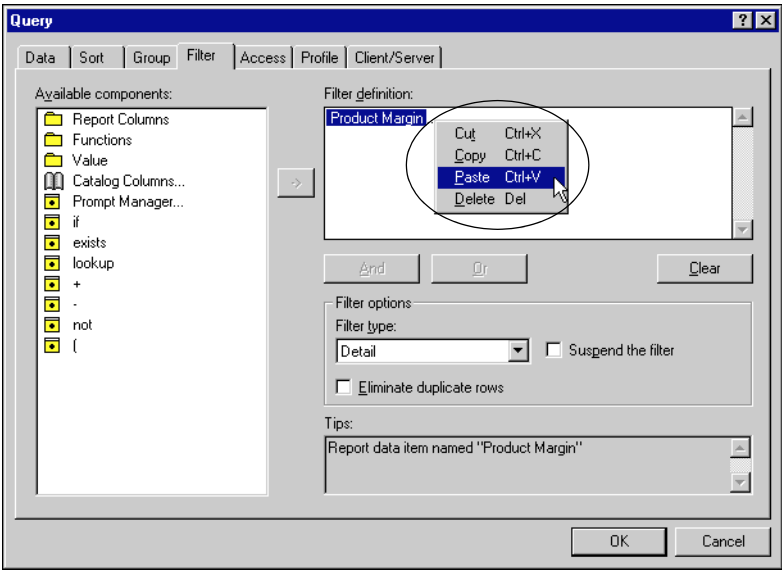
You can also open Impromptu 6.0 and another version of Impromptu on your computer at the same time. You can test Impromptu 6.0 without jeopardizing your existing Impromptu environment, and migrate between versions more easily.



For more information about multiple instances and versions, see the Impromptu online help.

Cut, Copy, and Paste Expressions

In Impromptu 6.0 you can cut, copy, and paste expressions from one instance of the expression editor to another. For example, you can cut part of a filter from the Filter tab (Query dialog box) and paste it into the Calculation Definition dialog box. You can cut, copy, and paste using the standard Windows shortcuts, or using a right-click menu.



For more information about the expression editor, see the Impromptu online help.

Export Formatted List Reports to Excel

When you save an Impromptu 6.0 list report in Excel format, you can retain your report formatting. The new Excel file uses the same fonts, borders, patterns, and styles as your report. If your report uses more than one list frame, each list frame appears on a separate worksheet.

The Excel workbook includes formatting from your Impromptu list report.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
	Product Line	Total Sale Amount	Total Sale Margin	Line Rev As % Of Type	Line Rev As % Of Total	Line Mar As % Of Type	Line Mar As % Of Total
1	Environmental Line		922762.09	587570.09			1004810070
2	Alert Devices	102803.39	64785.39	11.14059225	5.362790098	11.025885	7.699202702
3	Bio-Friendly Soaps	224838.09	146197.09	24.36524207	11.72879107	24.88164263	17.37430353
4	Recycled Products	50092.33	31802.33	5.428402929	2.613091371	5.412516828	3.7794414
5	Sunblock	195587.19	124499.19	21.19536211	10.20290329	21.18882362	14.79568928
6	Water Purifiers	349461.09	220286.09	37.87038064	18.22981201	37.49103192	26.17916261
7	GO Sport Line		239948.64	93116.84			1001310011
8	Carry-Bags	199759.92	76003.92	63.25111574	10.42057583	81.62227503	9.032431328
9	Sport Wear	40188.72	17112.72	16.74888426	2.096464617	18.37772497	2.033703896
10	Outdoor Products		754245.1	160769.1			1003910019
11	Back Packs	25368.42	6387.42	3.363418602	1.323356278	3.973039595	0.759091538
12	Cooking Equipment	167553.64	40836.64	22.2147469	8.740519175	25.40080152	4.853093715
13	Sleeping Bags	80339.01	17837.01	10.65157864	4.190924515	11.09479993	2.119779716
14	Tents	480984.03	95708.03	63.77025585	25.09077175	59.53135895	11.37410029
15							
16							



For more information about Excel files, see the Impromptu online help.

Insert Crosstab Sub-reports

You can insert crosstab sub-reports into an Impromptu 6.0 report. A crosstab sub-report is a crosstab frame in a report that has its own independent query. You can now combine crosstabs with list reports and chart reports to provide a comprehensive view of your business.

For more information about crosstabs, see the Impromptu online help.



Create PowerPrompts Applications

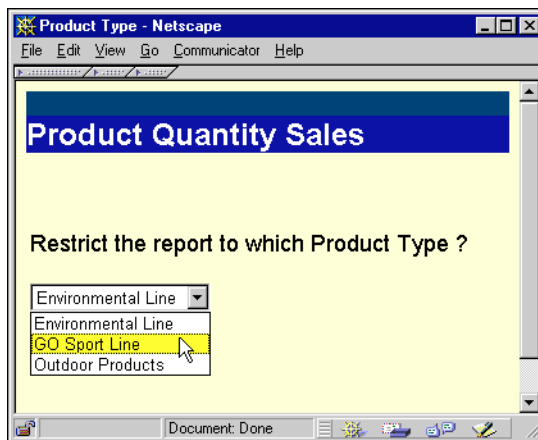
If you use Impromptu Web Reports to distribute your reports over the Web, you can use PowerPrompts to offer report consumers more control over report contents and format.

PowerPrompts are a series of HTML forms that report consumers fill in before they run a personal report. You can develop PowerPrompts that allow users to do almost anything to a report, including

- filtering
- adding and removing data items
- aligning report objects
- grouping, associating, and sorting

For example, you may want to give users the ability to add columns or align frames to the right.

You can use the PowerPrompts Developer Studio to create the HTML forms, specify the link structure between them, and determine what commands to send to Impromptu.



Report consumers can use PowerPrompts to customize report data and formatting.



For more information about PowerPrompts, see the *Discovering PowerPrompts* book.

Sort Picklist Prompts

When you add a picklist prompt to a report, you can leave the list un-sorted or sort it in ascending order. For example, if you use a report as the picklist source, you may want to present the selections in the order that they occur in the report.

For more information about sorting picklist prompts, see the Impromptu Administrator online help.



Use Reports As Data Sources

In Impromptu 6.0, you can use reports as data sources for other reports. You can use the Query dialog box to add columns from saved reports to a new report. Or, you can use the Tables dialog box to add saved reports as tables to your catalog, then join the report columns to other columns in your catalog.

You can use data source reports to create complex, layered queries that extend your reporting capabilities. When you open a report that uses another report as a data source, Impromptu runs the data source report and caches the data on your computer. The new report queries the cached information for the data source report. The data source report behaves like a hot file that is updated dynamically whenever another report reads from it.



For information about reusing reports, see the Impromptu online help.

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